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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 003388

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STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR,
I/GNEA, B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMAN
USAID/ANE/MEA
LONDON FOR GOLDRICH
PARIS FOR O'FRIEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR JO](#)

SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION ON IRAQI PRISONER
ABUSE

Summary

-- The lead story over the past two days, May 1-3, focused on the published pictures depicting the abuse of Iraqi prisoners at the hands of American and British troops. Lead stories highlight the U.S. and British official reaction as well as the worldwide reaction of condemnation.

Editorial Commentary

-- "Abu Ghareeb: America's real image"

News analyst Fahd Kheetan writes on the inside page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (05/02): "A cold reaction from Bush considered the perpetrators as a minority that do not reflect the true image of occupation troops. Bush is right. These are really a minority. Their actions in Abu Ghareeb are nothing compared to what the majority of the American occupation troops are doing: invading homes, arresting children, raping women (according to western media reports), killing in cold blood a whole family in Fallujah; tens of incidents every day in Iraqi cities that are more ugly than the actions of the Israeli occupation in Palestine. Jalal Talabani's comment on the Abu Ghareeb pictures is far worse than that of Bush's reaction. Talabani considered what is going on in Abu Ghareeb as natural if compared to what used to happen during Saddam Hussein's rule. But Talabani forgot to tell us what was the point of the American war of liberation for Iraq if Iraqis were going to live under worse conditions than those of Saddam's rule. In the minds of Arab citizens, Abu Ghareeb's pictures exactly match the ugly image of America, the occupier and the invader. All this talk by America of democracy and a greater Middle East is being exposed as a lie in Iraq and in Palestine before that. No one trusts America's projects for development in the region or its 'innocent' motives for helping the people of the Middle East. It is unbelievable that a country that acts so horrifically in Iraq would ask us to believe its efforts for protecting human rights and freedoms.. America is upset at the truth and not at the pictures -- the truth that is being relayed by Al-Jazeera and other satellite stations.. The war of liberation is a hoax and the pictures of Abu Ghareeb prison are telling the truth."

-- "From Nafha to Abu Ghareeb: the methods are the same"

Daily columnist Sultan Hattab writes on the op-ed page of semi-official, influential Arabic daily Al-Rai (05/02): "To those who admire the U.S. civilization being practiced in Iraq and to those who watch and welcome the liberation of Iraq, we ask them what their opinion is with regards to the crimes that summarize the ugly image of the American who exercises his hobby and his culture in Abu Ghareeb prison. Do they agree that the perpetrators are Nazis with everything that this description means and that their bogus merchandise of democracy and human rights is now being exposed, revealing crimes not known even in the middle ages? The American President, who came on television wearing the mask of surprise, is the one who bears the responsibility for the torture of the Iraqi people, for prolonging their suffering and for abusing them.. What is happening in Abu Ghareeb, Basra and many other locations of the American and British occupation forces exposes the false claim of liberation and reveals the face of the criminal.. What is happening in Iraqi prisons is exactly what happened and continues to happen in Israeli prisons. The perpetrator is one.. Torturing Iraqis is torturing our souls and consciences. They are Arabs just like us left to face a criminal occupation, just as the

Palestinians people had been left. How long will the criminals continue to deal with as a wolf handles a sheep?"

-- "Washington's dilemma from Al-Jazeera to Abu Ghareeb"

Daily columnist Urayb Rintawi writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (05/02): "The American dilemma in Iraq is turning into a state of general confusion that imposes itself upon the Bush administration and eats away at what is left of Washington's credibility, the morality of its political system and its noble values of freedom and democracy.. They [the Americans] are ashamed of their image in the media, but they are not ashamed of their deplorable actions that are as good as war crimes. Their dead conscience is not disturbed as they cause the death of hundreds and thousands of innocent people in Gaza and Baghdad. Instead of looking at themselves in the mirror, they go searching for justifications for their crimes, pointing the fingers of responsibility at the escalating feelings of hatred for them in the Arab and Muslim worlds."

-- "America's real image!"

Center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (05/01) editorializes: "According to information available from western sources, the American-British occupation authorities in Iraq are perpetrating war crimes and horrific violations of human rights on a very wide scale, and it seems that the pictures broadcast by CBS are not extraordinary or out of context.. All this confirms one truth: this is America's real image, however it tries to beautify it and portray itself as the leader of the free world!"
HALE